

The troops were immediately moved from the town into position on the high ground on each side of the Chaussée leading to Soissons, and about a quarter of a mile from Rheims, in front of which were posted strong parties of cavalry, infantry, and artillery. The enemy were seen advancing in heavy masses of cavalry and a numerous artillery, which they formed into two lines, when within about a mile and a half of the position of the Allies; the advance of both armies were immediately engaged, and for several hours cannonading and skirmishing in the plain between the two positions was constant; during this time the enemy made no other movement than that of extending their line to both flanks; they seemed to be waiting the arrival of the infantry, which had not yet appeared. About four o'clock the columns of cavalry with artillery were advanced, a heavy cannonade opened, and a very vigorous attack was made on two Russian battalions who were placed in advance; the steadiness of these troops defeated this attempt; the enemy were repulsed, and suffered very considerably from the fire of the infantry, who retired to the position without loss.

The enemy moved forward a line of artillery covered by their columns of cavalry; a tremendous cannonade was opened on both sides. The Allied troops were for a long time exposed to the galling fire of a very superior artillery, but they remained firm on their ground.

The enemy were seen to move a large column of cavalry to their right. At this moment, Count St. Priest (who had been constantly in the most exposed situations, setting a brilliant example to his troops), was struck from his horse by a cannon-ball, and obliged to be carried from the field. Such a loss at so critical a moment, was particularly unfortunate; during the short interval that occurred before he was replaced in his command, the enemy were making their greatest efforts.

General Emanuel's brigade of Russian cavalry, supporting the infantry on the left, was attacked by a large mass of the enemy's cavalry; nothing could be more gallant than the resistance made by these troops, but they were overpowered by a force four times their number, and suffered very severely. The enemy were at the same time pressing upon the centre and right, and the unavoidable event was the retreat of the whole corps through the town of Rheims. Such a retreat before an enemy so superior in cavalry, could not be effected without loss, but it has been much less than might be expected. The columns retired by the road of Berri au Bac. The entrance into Rheims was defended by a small party of infantry for two hours, and the enemy did not get possession of the town till ten o'clock; they had however crossed their cavalry round to the right of the town, and pushed on the road to Berri au Bac: this movement cut off the retreat of a small column by that road, and obliged them to retire by the route of Neufchatel. The whole of the corps have this morning joined the army of Field-Marshal Blücher in the neighbourhood of Laon.

I am not able to state the exact loss of the Allies in the affair of yesterday, but I understand it does not exceed two thousand men. Seven Prussian and one Russian gun were left in the pos-

session of the enemy. The cannon taken on the 12th, inst. Rheims, were removed to Châlons, before the town was re-occupied by the French troops.

The loss of the enemy in killed and wounded cannot but have been very considerable. It is said that Buonaparte was himself present during the whole of the day.

I have the honour to be, &c.
(Signed) THOS. NOEL HARRIS,
Aide-de-Camp.

MY LORD, *Arcis, March 18, 1814.*

IN consequence of successes obtained by Marshal Blücher's army near Laon, Prince Schwartzberg carried his head-quarters on the 15th to Pont sur Seine, and, with the view of assuming the offensive, directed the 4th, 5th, and 6th corps to pass the Seine, and endeavour to establish themselves at Villeneuve, Provins, and Bray, while the 3d corps established itself at Sens. Before these movements, however, were carried into complete execution, the news of the defeat of a part of General St. Priest's corps on the 14th, and the occupation of Rheims by the enemy, arrived.

Prince Schwartzberg determined to suspend the movement he had commenced; he brought his head-quarters on the 16th to this place, and collected his army within reach of it.

The 5th corps occupied the town of Arcis; its advanced guard was placed at Mailly and Sommesons. The 6th corps was in position between St. Ferrail and Mont le Potier. The 4th corps was at Nogent, parties detached from it occupying Marriot and Sordun, on the road to Provins and Bray. The 3d corps was between Villeneuve and Troyes.

The details of the affair of General St. Priest have not yet been received; I fear that Officer was most severely wounded, he retired in the direction of Berri au Bac, and is supposed to have formed his junction with General D'York.

By the direction of this retreat, Rheims was left open to the French, who immediately occupied it. From thence they moved upon Châlons and Epernay, which they took possession of on the 16th, the small garrisons which occupied them having retired upon their approach.

The enemy yesterday made no movement in advance from those places. It has however to-day been reported from General Keiseroff, that Buonaparte was last night at Epernay, and that he is advancing upon Fere Champenoise.

In the contemplation of such a movement, and in the determination in any case to march upon Châlons, to support the movements of General Blücher, Prince Schwartzberg had yesterday directed the different corps of his army to move into a position, the guards and reserves between Donnemont and Dommartin; the 5th corps between Rammerci and Arcis; the 6th corps between Arcis and Charny; the 4th to form the left at Mery; the 3d to assemble between Nogent and Pont sur Seine.

General Bianchi was attacked on the 11th near Maçon, by two divisions of Marshal Angereau's army. The affair lasted till dark, when the enemy retired, leaving a considerable number of killed and wounded on the field of battle; five hundred prisoners, and two cannon, remained in the hands of the